1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

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The birth of independence and the War of Liberation. The next important step[1] was the organization of the Estonian soldiers who had fought in the Russian Army into Estonian national units. Response to the proclamation of Estonian authorities was enthusiastic and many of the over 100,000 Estonians in the Russian armed forces returned home and joined the Estonian army, among them many high officers, although in many Russian units the Estonians were not granted permission to leave. When in St. Petersburg the Russian Provisional Government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks on November 8, 1917, the Estonian Bolsheviks followed the same pattern and the War Revolutionary Committee, headed by V. Kingissepp, took over from Poska the Commissariat of Estonia, and the councils of workers and soldiers began taking

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1 [After election of Estonian Dist. 37, July 1917, see cat. 116, pp. 36-- Analyst]

175 721 operation on November 11, 1918. But now the Red Army of Russia decided that the time was ripe to attack Estonia.

175 721 Estonia's war with Soviet Russia, from November 28, 1918, to January 3, 1920, including the war with the German Landeswehr has been called the War of Liberation. Because the Estonian army had been dispersed and many leaders arrested as a result of the recent occupational policies, the Red Army was able to make great headway at the beginning of the war.

• [70] The morale of the Estonians was low at first, but with the return of Colonel Johan Laidoner from Russia and the assistance of the British fleet, hope was revived. On December 23rd, the Provisional Government appointed Laidoner commander-in-chief of the armed forces and Admiral Juhan Pitka commander of the navy.

642 The leader of the sovietization of Estonia during the first Soviet Occupation was Andrey Zhdanov, a member of the Political Bureau and of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. A new Communist puppet government was appointed, with Johannes Vares, a physician and left-wing poet, as Premier. President K. Päts remained formally in office for a while, although he was actually a prisoner of
•[701] the occupation authorities. General Laidoner was relieved of his duties as Commander-in-
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Chief. The Estonian Defense Union was dissolved and all its arms surrendered. In addition, almost all private organizations were
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[646] liquidated. The Communists speeded up the elections of a new House of Representatives, which were held on July 14-15, 1940. Although non-Communist candidates were also allowed at first, these were later all withdrawn and
1 [in 1940; see cat. 116, pp. -61-52-, 57-61 -- Analyst.]

[Estonian Constitution as of November, 1947]

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642 Outside of the spheres set forth in Art. 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Estonian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

[701] Art. 13a. The Estonian SSR has its own Republican military formations.

[701] Art. 13b. The Estonian SSR has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

631 Art. 14. The Estonian SSR consists of the districts of Kharjuma, Yarvamaa, Lyaanema, Petserima, Pyarnuma, Saarema, Tartuma, Valgama, Vilyandima, Viruma, Vyruma; and of the cities of Tallin, Tartu, Narva, Pyarnu and Paldiski which do not form part of districts.

642 Art. 15. The Estonian SSR reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Estonian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Estonian SSR.

641 Art. 18. Every citizen of the Estonian SSR is a citizen of the USSR. Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Estonian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Estonian SSR.[1]

642 Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Estonian SSR as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Estonian SSR and control over its observance;

b) Establishment of the administrative-territorial divisions of the Estonian SSR and of the boundaries of districts and volosts;

c) Legislation of the Estonian SSR;

d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;

e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Estonian SSR;

f) Approval of the state budget of the Estonian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;

g) Determination of state and local taxes; imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR, as well as direction of the fulfilment of local budgets;

h) Direction of insurance and savings;

i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organizations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;

j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;

k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;

l) Direction of dwelling-houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernization of cities and other inhabited places;

[1] [Errata: Cf. Errata sheet, Cat. 116, p.11 for addition--Analyst]